

# Teaching Aboriginal Culture Online: sustaining traditions of knowledge sharing<sup>1</sup>

## **Cat Kutay**

Computer Science and Engineering  
The University of New South Wales

## **Lynette Riley**

The Koori Centre  
The University of Sydney

## **Deirdre Howard-Wagner**

Department of Sociology and Social Policy  
The University of Sydney

## **Janet Mooney**

The Koori Centre  
The University of Sydney

This paper is an account of a research project being undertaken for an Australian Learning and Teaching Council grant to develop *Indigenous On-Line Cultural Teaching & Sharing*. The project is built on an existing face-to-face interactive presentation based on the theme of Australian Aboriginal Kinship systems, which has been designed for teaching university and school students and their teachers and describes the process used to develop web services that aim to provide more interactive and exploratory learning environments.

We are collecting knowledge of the Aboriginal culture in relation to a theme and presenting this in a teaching framework that can be continually updated with community stories. We are consulting with Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students and community members who attended interactive presentations to gather ideas for transferring the model to online format and presenting it with stories relevant to the specific professional areas of our students, such as sociology, law, education and social work. We present here the teaching framework developed in this project for Aboriginal cultural teaching online.

Keywords: Aboriginal, Indigenous Culture Online, Teaching Framework, Action Research

## **Introduction**

The online course has been developed to increase the access to a highly successful Kinship presentation developed by Riley (Riley and Genner, 2011) by placing it online. Riley is a Wiradjuri and Gamilaroi woman with over 30 years experience as an educator in NSW. The course is now an online workshop comprised of videos of the face-to-face Kinship presentation, interleaved with short role-play games for students to gain some understanding of the different sections and levels of relationships involved in Aboriginal Kinship. These games require a simple selection by students to put their icon in the correct relationship with others on the screen.

A second part of the online system is being developed to provide a repository of community narratives that are related to themes and concepts in the workshop and which will be available for future generations to both hear and update. We have designed a set of interactive scenario-based games where the narratives are being inserted for teachers and their students to listen. Using innovative web services, teachers will select the narratives that are relevant to their course, and link these within the range of scenarios. The stories assist students to relate their future work to situations described by the narratives. In the scenarios students are to choose the way they relate to the characters, listen to their narratives, and become aware of their own role in communities in relation to services provided with and for Aboriginal people.

While the project aims to extend to multiplayer systems in future, at present we are working with single-player

---

<sup>1</sup> *The Australian Government Office for Learning and Teaching has provided support for this project. The views in this project do not necessarily reflect the views of the Office.*

simulation games. The work we describe here fit the definition of simulations (Wills, 2012), although it involves one person role-plays with computer-generated models or agents. It is similar in learning design to PPressure Point! as described by Demetrious (2007) where models use the pre-recorded voice of people to provide the main narrative learning material. For our project, these stories will be collected from Aboriginal students, staff and Aboriginal community members as well as some non-Aboriginal professionals, to provide a wide variety of experiences from which undergraduate students can construct their own understanding of the cultural conflicts that can arise from colonizing and ethnocentric world-views.

The learning system is designed to reflect where possible Aboriginal knowledge sharing processes. This is traditionally through interwoven stories, song and dance at a community ceremony or corroboree (Langton, 1997). These ceremonies or performances provide for re-enactment and are an environment for experiential learning of the subject matter. While web services provide a form of mediation that is representational and more static than previous methods of knowledge sharing (Verran & Christie, 2007), this medium does provide for greater user adaption and generation of material by many distantly located authors.



**Figure 1a Introduction with comments and panel to upload narratives  
1b Narrative browser**

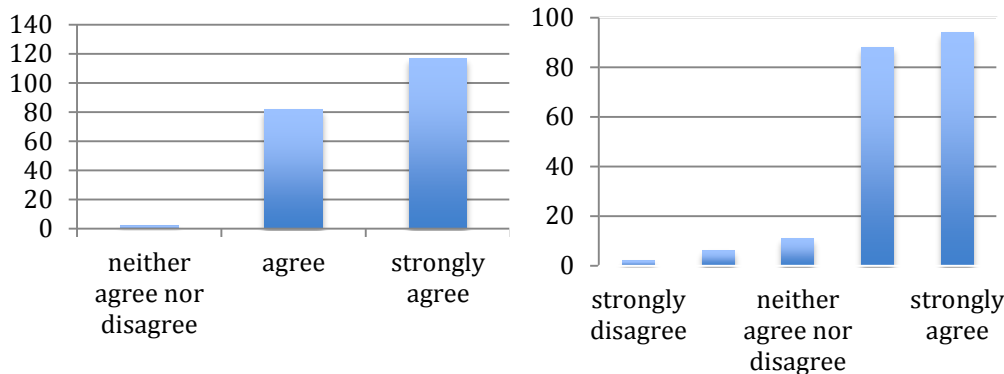
In selecting to move the presentation online, we considered work such as that by Donovan (2007) who notes there are overlapping commonalities between Information Communication Technologies and Aboriginal pedagogical systems, which include the experiential nature of learning; the ability to create an immersive space that is flexible to the specific learners and their context; and the ability to combine material from many informants. Furthermore we wish to utilise the notion of performance, and develop the individual narratives into a coherent story, in this case using simulation environments.

## Evaluation of Interactive Presentation

A reflective critique of the interactive presentation pre-dates the project and has been ongoing since the original interactive presentation, developed in 1987, which has since been presented in many educational, organisational and community settings since this time. In the last six years the interactive Kinship presentation has been made available to various groups of students and staff at public schools and Universities across Sydney. It was the success of this presentation that provided the impetus to develop an online version that would enable more people to benefit from learning these concepts, and allow more aboriginal people to contribute to the experiential stories used in the teaching.

## Feedback from interactive Kinship presentation to under-graduate Education students

In 2009 the interactive Kinship presentations were provided to all first year educational students at Sydney University. At the end of each interactive presentation, students are asked for comments on what they found useful and what could have been explained better, for instance issues that were hard to understand when presented in this format. This was for the presenter to evaluate what concepts she may be assuming too much prior knowledge from the students and so allow her to adapt her presentation to their needs.



**Figure 2a Survey Results – The activity helped me understand the nature of Indigenous relations in contemporary Australia**

**Figure 2b Survey Results - I could see the relevance of the activity to my work as a teacher**

The presenter ran eight sessions with up to 64 students per session over a week. After interactive presentations, several cohorts of students were asked about their experience, and of 430 attendees, 201 returned the questionnaires that asked students about their experience. This is a response rate of nearly 50%.

What has been most interesting is the nearly unanimous response from teaching staff involved in organising the workshop for their students, and other school staff who attended workshops at the Regional Education Department Office. It was clear that, while they responded well to the first presentations, those who attended more than once were more able to reflect on the general concepts portrayed in the presentation. The main concept is how the Aboriginal world view focuses on relationships within a society and ‘contrasts to the colonial power’s liberal world view based on individual responsibility’. These contrasting world views can be seen at the core of most of the legal issues that affect Indigenous Australians’ (Mitchell, 2011).

Further comments were collected from students both at these presentations and later. We provide some examples below from the under-graduate Education students. We have also collected comments from Social Policy students, law professionals and Aboriginal students to help develop the teaching in the online system, which we discuss next.

**Table 2 Sample comments from 2009 Education students**

Survey	Comment
2	Effective education is dependent on an understanding of culture and the implications of that culture on an individual's learning
20	As I may have Aboriginal students in my class and if I were to call upon a wrongdoing of one of the students and his parents did not turn up, I would comprehend why other members would come instead.
31	As a teacher understanding these different communities and different people's background
35	It is important to understand why some children behave differently and how we can learn to understand and help them.
38	Helps understand the relationship between kids and adults in schools in regard to parents/guardians
50	To avoid misconception and to teach children and help them understand the truth and why the indigenous community is the way it is today.
64	Promotes a better understanding of a student Aboriginal background, historically, politically, culturally, etc.
75	Indigenous Australians may have certain belief/cultural systems that may affect their development. Nonetheless teachers are required to respect that.
83	Definitely. Helps me understand the culture better and have more cultural sensitivity.
93	This was very relevant because it helps educators understand why parents (biological) were not always involved in their Childs education, that aunts or uncles may be more involved because of the skills they have.

## Learning Design

To enable us to replicate this work online we needed for formalise the learning process and develop evaluation strategies. We have chosen to use a learning environment where we can focus on the themes of relationships and interactions through games, and where both a narrative teaching style and a social constructivist approach to teaching and learning are used. Both respect and are in keeping with Aboriginal pedagogical and knowledge

sharing approaches. Understanding relationships is the first priority in teaching Aboriginal culture and narratives is the process used by Aboriginal teachers for sharing their knowledge. The web service will furthermore allow us to enhance the learning by incorporating narratives from Aboriginal students, staff and community members to convey a variety of perspective on Aboriginal knowledge to non-Aboriginal teachers and students.

A narrative teaching style is beneficial for other reasons too. Aboriginal students, staff and communities will get a chance to tell their stories to be presented in a learning context that reflects the knowledge system of the Aboriginal contributors. In fact the teaching of culture would be invalid without Aboriginal contributors translating their experiences into the new context (Ramsey and Walker, 2010). Similar to other work on community narratives (Kutay & Mundine 2010; Daniel et al., 2003; Rodriguez et al., 2010), the project facilitates Aboriginal knowledge sharing in an online environment. The use of narrative content forms has proven to be an effective way to teach non-Aboriginal students (Egan, 1998; Blakesley, 2010 and Andrews et al, 2010) and respect traditional Aboriginal storytelling methods (Bradley, 2010).

As well as sharing many aspects of Aboriginal pedagogical and knowledge sharing approaches, narrative teaching styles have emerged within higher education more generally through questioning whether conventional pedagogies prepare students for real life situations. In this context, narrative pedagogy is a phenomenological pedagogy that focuses on the lived experience. While phenomenology emerges out of sociology, in health related disciplines, such as nursing, narrative pedagogy in the higher education context emerges from listening to shared stories, the sharing of knowledge and lived experience (Diekmann & Diekmann, 2009). A narrative pedagogy allows ‘...for a richer array of listening (interpreting) than that allowed by the usual application and presentation of disciplinary epistemologies’ (Diekmann & Diekmann, 2009: xv).

Also, the narrative teaching style complements a social constructivist approach, and this research is based on developing teaching and learning platforms where students learn through active formation of their own knowledge rather than by memorising or absorbing ideas from presentations by a single teacher (Vygotsky 1978). This approach suggests learning through experimentation or experiential learning and providing opportunities for students to create their own ‘worlds’.

These worlds are being developed in Unity, a game engine and open platform for programming animations and simulated gaming paths. By creating practical scenarios that can be tailored to the student’s specific professional interests (such as law, education, social work or health) we enable the broad sharing of the audio resources within a learning environment suitable for use within existing University courses, and so illustrate:

1. The importance of Aboriginal people’s experiences in explaining the significance of policies and practices that have impacted on their lives and the inherent cultural differences, thus validating this knowledge.
2. The value of a repository of resources for Aboriginal people to share with non-Aboriginal people on different approaches to culture within communities, and the need for a regular update of the repository.
3. The wide range of issues that exist as cultural variations, and the opportunity provided by the web to provide tools to support course development through linking some of the variations into a learning repository.
4. The need for culturally relevant online resources to include Aboriginal perspectives in online knowledge sharing.

The web services used are similar to YouTube, providing the tools to upload videos for sharing within the learning context, but it also provides a strong context for the material, so that it can be re-used appropriately in game scenarios.

## Themes

There are six themes connected to Kinship relationships that are covered in the online workshop. The six themes are sequential allowing the student to move successively from one level of knowledge to the next. The student learns about Moiety first, as it is the foundation of Aboriginal Kinship structures and they progressively move through to learning about Aboriginal Nations and language groups. This also enables students to gain an understanding of the complexities of Kinship relationships and the effect on such a cultural system of removals, forced co-settlement and the enforced use of pidgin English as a common language. The six themes are listed in Table 1 below, with the role-play used to assist in student’s experiential learning.

**Table 1: Workshop themes and role-plays**

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Role Play</b>
1. Welcome and Moiety	Dividing into Moieties and introduce concepts and foundations of Kinship structure.
2. Totem and Relationships	Divide Totem groups and see how Totems are divided between Moieties, plus environmental links and establishment of reciprocal responsibilities.
3. Skin Names	Divide into Skin Names, note generational relations, family connections, structures and marriage rules.
4. Language and Affiliations	Divide into Nations aligned to language groups and note relations within Nations.
5. Lines of Communication	Put down lines to link Nation and language groups and discuss relationships between Nations that affect conservation, survival, religious and Kinship connections.
6. Disconnected Lines	Connection lines are removed. Discuss effect of forced break between Nations, removals, forced co-settlement and use of pidgin English as common language.

The role-plays are short flash videos allowing some interaction from students. They are required to move their icon according to their relationship to others on the screen, and so deals with themes being taught in the online workshop. At present guidance is presented as audio commentary from the original interactive presentation. They allow students to change from the role of observer to one where they are acting within the culture they are learning about in that they are assigned a Moiety, Totem group, Skin Name and a Nation. As the second part of the workshop is developed, more sophisticated games and a variety of narratives will provide a more immersive experience of these themes and concepts.

## Levels of learning

The introductory online workshop provides information for the students on how Aboriginal Kinship systems work, and how this affects reciprocal responsibilities and relationships within the cultures. Students are then presented in scenario based games with situations experienced by Aboriginal people after invasion through the narratives, where Kinship systems were ignored and their culture denigrated. Students will then be asked to consider the various effects of European culture and the introduced language on Aboriginal systems and cultures. These scenarios are more highly guided experiences than the research and journal style of role-play discussed in Genat, Naidu and Fong (2008). and are based on the idea of reusable labs developed in Ben-Naim and Prusty (2010).

There are two main methods used in the workshop and scenario designs to provide for immersive learning. The first is to abstract, where the workshop presents Aboriginal views and explains what is being done within the culture to preserve their specific society and the environment in which they live; and presents how this varies from non-Aboriginal culture. For example, 'Kinship' is used in all cultures to establish the responsibilities you have for those closest to you. In Aboriginal societies Kinship obligations have to work across Family, Clan and Nation groups spread across Australia. This has led to a complex system of rules, such as restricting marriage to distant relations. In larger societies, such as British, the family obligations are restricted to immediate biological relations and often not linked to marriage rules.

The second is by analogy from known experience, where aspects of culture are selected, and then students are asked how this would affect relations, responsibilities or survival within another cultural context. Two examples of this strategy are to:

1. Imagine you are welcoming someone to your Country or Nation. What would you explain to them so they are aware of the basic rules and obligations within your society?
5. Remember the place you grew up and all its features. Then imagine if your parents, their parents, and so on also lived on the same land, and could tell you how the land changed over millennia of time, the geography of the land and where and how all the animals on this land lived; how to care for the land and its inhabitants; and through this how to respect the Land. What would your connections and relation to the land be?

Out of these two approaches has arisen a third mode of learning, which is primarily done through narratives. This we call the historical context, where a lack of ability by the invaders to 'walk in the shoes of Aboriginal people' has led to the imposition of the rules of one culture on another. The aim of the workshop and gaming system is to enable students to understand that this has happened, and the ongoing effects this has on the people

who will be their clients and with whom they may work when they graduate as lawyers, social workers, teachers, etc.

We have used the Action Research methodology to develop and evaluate the learning system, both to verify its success in light of the original presentation, and to analyse the benefits or losses from moving the teaching online.

## Action Research

While the project involves developing an innovative learning context and tools for teachers, the focus is on how teachers will design the learning sequence for specific learning outcomes (Wills, 2012). The approach taken for this development is Action Research (Kemmis & McTaggart, 1998), being a process that is self-correcting (cyclical); able to adapt to innovative situations (dynamic); and involving all stake holders (collaborative). This approach is also known to incorporate practical action in the pursuit of theoretical understanding in a manner that removes the research from the colonising framework of previous studies (Smith, 1999) and ‘opens a space where colleagues were able to create a new community of engagement’ (Everett, 2008, p.1).

At the same time we had to consider the appropriateness of IT for Indigenous knowledge sharing. While we place the Indigenous students in the role of peer-teachers, we were encouraged by some previous research into Aboriginal use of IT (Kutay & Ho, 2011; Reedy, 2011) and note the concerns raised by Reedy (2011):

The students embraced the use of technology and were very interested in developing digital literacy skills to use in the learning environment as well as for work and social purposes. The digital tools used in the project were those which were available, reliable, effective and easy to use. The tools used in the classroom during workshops and subsequently for homework activities were also linked to skills that students indicated themselves that they wanted to develop (p.1063).

Action Research is a complementary methodology that allows us to facilitate a reflective pedagogical project that will lead to educational transformation (Somekh & Zeichner, 2009, p.6). The use of the term action research in this context signifies the collaborative, productive and reforming characteristics of the project. That is, one of the overarching objectives of the project is to contribute to pedagogical reform by engaging a range of stakeholders (Brydon-Miller & Maguire 2009, p.79) in the project development in a way that endeavours to support strategic change in higher education by embedding Aboriginal knowledge in mainstream courses, through web services. Also this research involves different phases of an interactive action-reflection cycle.

The project development and stakeholder engagement is being conducted over three stages. For each stage, there is a cycle or series of steps undertaken to ensure that all stakeholders are actively engaged in the development of resources forming the basis of the web services that provide exploratory learning environments. Details of the completed first and second stage of stakeholder engagement and evaluation are presented below. The third stage of stakeholder engagement and evaluation will be with Aboriginal users uploading narratives and students using the final simulation role-plays.

## Stage One

In stage one the project team ran a series of evaluative sessions with non-Aboriginal students and Aboriginal students and communities. The first cycle of evaluation involved non-Aboriginal students engaging with the material content of the interactive workshop and commenting on the ability of the online version to explain Kinship concepts. An evaluation survey was done of the original interactive presentation, which was conducted in 2009. The findings from this feedback are presented later.

In 2011, face-to-face discussions have been held with participants following their participation in a presentation. These sessions were run with both Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal students who had participated in the face-to-face interactive presentation as part of their course attendance.

Non-Aboriginal students were asked:

- What did you like about the Kinship presentation. What was new to you?
- What was hard to understand?
- What would you like more information on?
- Would you use this understanding in your profession?

- How was this relative to your course work?

The feedback from these sessions was found to focus on enhancing the presentation of the material. As the creator and presenter, Riley used the feedback from these questions to improve the delivery of the material ensuring that students' level of comprehension improved. Since the presenter is Aboriginal, at times she assumes some knowledge and ideas when explaining the concepts to students, so feedback from the surveys and face-to-face discussions has helped refine the presentation. Once the initial presentation was refined, the video material was edited into thematic modules.

The next cycle in this stage involved consultation with Aboriginal community members and students which focused more on suggesting additional material we can use online, to provide further resources and perspectives for students who are using the workshop in their courses. Aboriginal students who were enrolled in years 2-4 of the Bachelor Education Secondary Aboriginal Studies course, which is run in Block Mode through the Koori Centre, University of Sydney, were asked:

- What stories would relate to the Kinship presentation in an on-line version?
- What would need to go onto an on-line presentation?
- What Kinship issues are needed to be mentioned and explored?

From these sessions a series of ideas were gathered and collated under the workshop themes. This material is being collected and linked to the workshop videos as time-selected locations, according to relevancy. For example these sessions were used to expand on the sub-topics to be included under the main themes and has been published (Kutay et al. 2012). This expanded table will be further developed to provide the topics to collate narratives added to the workshop.

Through this process, Aboriginal students who will be future Aboriginal Studies teachers are involved in knowledge transmission, and non-Aboriginal students who may work with Aboriginal clients and colleagues are involved in shaping the material content of what they learn and what knowledge gaps exist. This has important pedagogical implications for providing student-centred learning, which involves students being consulted about their learning. In this context, students are agents in the development of their own knowledge resources (Stenhouse 1978) and the process of transformative learning (Fielding 2001). There is a growing body of evidence demonstrating the benefits of student involvement in the development of pedagogical resources (see Bovill et al., 2010). In this case, consulting Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students in the development of the e-learning environment will ensure that the web-based resources align with the knowledge base for other students.

Before the videos were made publically available online, the presenter reviewed them to verify that the material was handled correctly in the editing. This final cycle of evaluation lead to the collection of further audio material from an interactive face-to-face presentation, which was interleaved into the videos to form the online version of the presentation, now called 'the workshop'.

## Stage Two

The second stage dealt specifically with the web based workshop and drew on the expertise of practitioners and specialists within Aboriginal Education and those with expertise in the development of online learning environments.

The first cycle of evaluation involved reflecting on the usability of the web based workshops and the services that will be needed as the project develops. The videos were placed online in an interface developed for the project, which allowed uploading of the material, and clipping and commenting of videos. To allow us to update and refine online material, we provided a facility where people can link to audio, video and text based comments online. There are always new resources being developed online in the area of Aboriginal knowledge and cultural expression, and the online workshop provides an option for linking these into a coherent knowledge system. A reference team of IT specialists and those involved in similar teaching projects evaluated the workshop interface and these changes were incorporated. Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal students' will do further evaluation as users of the interface in the third stage.

The second cycle of evaluation involved a brainstorming and discussion amongst the extended research team and representatives of an Aboriginal Cultural Reference Team (ACRT) about the learning needs of students viewing the workshop. The ACRT is made up of Aboriginal people who are also long-time educators, who have been invited to be involved in assessing the material and providing feedback on the teaching framework.

This first session with the ACRT also took into account the fact that the physical interaction of the face-to-face workshop would be missing in the online environment and as such we needed to identify and provide more learning tools to compensate for this. For example in moving from a face-to-face interactive workshop to an online environment, it was identified that:

- The workshop would lack the simple role-play exercises that are used by Riley in the face-to-face interactive presentation, which are vital for students to feel cultural connections. Therefore these were developed in flash and inserted in the workshop stream.
- The workshop should be viewed without the distraction of comments in the first run through and then in subsequent reviews the students can see the inserted comments.
- The separate components of the workshop should be accessible to students together in a single screen view to retain the topic order, however this sequence of topics can be stepped through to find points they wish to review.

The presenter and the research team then reviewed the changes to the workshop. Further amendments are being considered, and these will be tested with Aboriginal students and community members when they add their narratives in the next stage.

The final cycle at this stage was the development of a more structured teaching framework as described in the next section. This review was carried out with discussions with community members at public forums and private discussions. This included presenting the project and discussing its aims at the NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group Conference. Also the presenter visited her own community and talked with Aboriginal Education workers, who had been involved in previous face-to-face interactive Kinship presentations, about their suggestions to developing the workshop into an interactive online simulation.

To continue this process, we will meet regularly with the ACRT to access their expert knowledge and obtain feedback on the cultural content, ensuring we avoid mis-representation. They will also advise on educational delivery and resource development to support the on-line workshop.

## **Teaching Framework**

In adopting a reflective approach that incorporated stakeholder feedback, the teaching framework was developed from the interactive Kinship presentation and the online interface was edited to include the extra material that had been collected as relevant to each theme of the workshop. The details of this process have been published previously (Kutay, et al, 2012). The next stage was to take the feedback from the stakeholder consultations and develop the teaching goals and strategies to be implemented in the online workshop and simulations.

From engaging with various stakeholders, the first cycle collected information that enabled us to identify the following set of requirements:

1. The project needs to ensure the learning is not too confrontational, and reduce the guilt effect, and focus on enabling understanding of the issues (themes).
2. The simulation should provide a flow from the information provided in the interactive presentation (or its online format) to Aboriginal people's experience of the cultures in conflict. The stories need to be linked to this original information to reinforce the concepts.
3. The simulations need to be immersive, where the environment is encoded with rules and attributes that guide feedback on actions.
4. The online workshop needs to provide tag categories that will automatically generate relations between stories when they are uploaded and can be used to automatically link stories into learning paths in the simulation. The links will help:
  - a. modeling stories the user should hear next based on what they have heard before; as well as
  - b. select questions to ask after each scenario.
5. Users need to be able to click on an object for more information (these are the interactive presentation comments already collected).
6. The online workshop needs to include different types of scenarios which students may be placed in. These include:
  - a. becoming professionals working with Aboriginal communities;
  - b. working along-side of members of the Aboriginal community.
7. A series of multiple choice or open-ended questions needed to be added after each scenario.



For the next stage we need to develop the game simulations in line with the teaching framework. The simulations are to be based on generic scenario templates that can be edited by the teacher to suit the professional area of the student; location: such as urban or rural; and immersion: whether in role as Aboriginal or non-Aboriginal. The teacher will also select the stories that are relevant within the scenario, and the tagging of stories will assist in placing them within the scenario's learning path.

To carry out the story collection we treated them as comments on the initial video material, which the contributors load to the website and tag with the related section of the workshop. After the stories are collected and used to design the simulation, they will form the voice (and image, if in video format) of the computer simulated models in the game.

To collect narratives we are running the interactive presentation, and using the online workshop to present the themes and then ask Aboriginal students and community members to comment. The first stage will be conducted via forms of focus groups where Aboriginal people will be asked to discuss the online workshop's content, and then suggest the sort of narratives and stories Aboriginal people may wish to add to this. The focus groups will be designed to ensure that this method is consistent with Aboriginal knowledge sharing practices. We will then arrange a suitable time to collect the narratives in face-to-face interviews and in a manner consistent with Aboriginal protocols. There will also be an option for the contributor to directly record their story and upload it to the site for moderation, so we also will assess the usability of this uploading system.

## Conclusion

This paper presents a snapshot of the *Indigenous On-Line Cultural Teaching & Sharing* project. We have shown a new approach to transmitting Aboriginal cultural knowledge from a one-person interactive presentation to an on-line experience, which will provide a sustainable way to continue this teaching program and benefit a greater number of students and teachers. This will additionally provide a portal for an increased number of Aboriginal people to add their narratives and so increase the depth of learning in the areas of historical and imposed structures and their effect on Aboriginal people, retaining this knowledge for future generations. This learning will assist professional practitioners to gain insight and provide improved services in working with Aboriginal people, both as clients and colleagues.

Whilst our project is focused specifically on Aboriginal Kinship, we are also developing online teaching resources, in consultation with Edith Cowan University, who have developed similar material relating to the Nyungar (Aboriginal) experience of Health in Western Australia. We therefore present this work, including the online sharing tools and the process for developing a teaching framework, as having applicability to and across other teaching projects.

In keeping with the reflective and adaptive learning and teaching philosophy underpinning it, this project is developing the simulation games using a modeling approach that provides flexible links to both the particular narratives used in a context, and the questions to be asked that relate to these stories. As the narratives can be continually added to the repository, we ensure that new stories will be available to be selected and used by teachers, and the choice of simulations continually updated.

## References

- Ben-Naim, D., & Prusty, B.G. (2010). Towards a Community of Practice Concerning the Use of Adaptive Tutorials in Engineering Mechanics. In *Proceedings of the 21st Annual Australasian Association of Engineering Education*. Sydney: Australia.
- Bovill, C., Cook, A., Felten, S., & Felten, P. (2011). Students as co-creators of teaching approaches, course design, and curricula: implications for academic developers. In *International Journal for Academic Development*, 16:2, pp.133-145. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1360144X.2011.568690>
- Bradley, J. (2010). *Singing saltwater country*. Sydney: Allen & Unwin.
- Daniel, B, Schwier, R, and McCalla G. (2003). Social Capital in Virtual Learning Communities and Distributed Communities of Practice. In *Canadian Journal of Learning and technology*, 29(3) Autumn.
- Demetrious, K. (2007). Playing a critical role: Experiential learning resources and analytical media studies and in higher education. In *ICT: Providing choices for learners and learning*. Paper presented at Ascilite Conference, December 2007, Singapore. <http://www.ascilite.org.au/conferences/singapore07/procs/demetrious.pdf>

- Donovan, M. (2007). Can Technological Tools be Used to Suit Aboriginal Learning Pedagogies? Dyson, L.E, Hendriks, M, Grant, S. (eds.) *Information Technology and Indigenous People*. (pp.93-104). Miami FL: Idea Group Inc. <https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-59904-298-5.ch011>
- Everett, K. (2008). Affecting change through assessment: improving Indigenous studies programs using engaging assessment. *Proceedings of the ATN Assessment Conference 2008: engaging students in assessment*. <http://hdl.handle.net/1959.14/96019>
- Fielding, M. (2001). Students as radical agents of change. *Journal of Educational Change*. 2(3), pp.123–141.
- Genat, B., Naidu, S. & Fong, P. (2008) Shifting perspectives about Aboriginal health and history: Using digital archives in an online role play. *Proceedings ascilite Melbourne*, pp. 309-319. <http://www.ascilite.org.au/conferences/melbourne08/procs/genat.pdf>
- Kutay, C. & Mundine, K. (2010). Training for Inclusion. *AIATSIS ITIC Workshop proceedings*, July.
- Kutay, C. and Ho, P. (2011). Story Telling for Cultural Knowledge Sharing. In Luo, X. Cao, Y. Yang, B. Liu J. and Ye, F. (Eds.) *New Horizons, in Web Based Learning, LNCS 6537*, pp. 28-34, Springer-Verlag Berlin Heidelberg. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-642-20539-2\\_4](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-642-20539-2_4)
- Kutay, C., Mooney, J., Riley, L., and Howard-Wagner, D. (in press 2012) Experiencing Indigenous Knowledge On-line as a Community Narrative. In Mackinlay, L., and Nakata, M. (Eds) *Australian Journal of Indigenous Education*. Vol. 40S. <https://doi.org/10.1017/jie.2012.8>
- Kemmis, S. and McTaggart, R. (1988). *The action research planner*. 3rd edition. Geelong. Deakin University.
- Langton, M. (1997). Grandmothers' Law, Company Business and Succession in Changing Aboriginal Land Tenure Systems. In Yunipingu, G. *Our Land is Our Life*. St Lucia, Queensland: University of Queensland Press, pp. 84-117.
- Mitchell, T. (2011). Personal communication, feedback from interactive Kinship workshops.
- Ramsay, R. and Walker, D. (2010). Translating Hybridity: The curious case of the first Kanak novel. (Déwé Gorodé's L'épave). *The AALITRA Review: A Journal of Literary Translation*, 1, pp. 44–57.
- Reedy, A. (2011). Equality in a digital world: Engaging Indigenous learners. *Proceedings ascilite 2011 Hobart*. (pp.1061-1074). <http://www.ascilite.org.au/conferences/hobart11/downloads/papers/Reedy-full.pdf>
- Riley, L., and Genner, M. (2011). Bemel-Gardoo: Embedding cultural content in the science and technology syllabus. Nola Purdie, Gina Milgate and Hannah Rachel Bell (Eds) *Two Way Teaching and Learning: toward culturally reflective and relevant education*. ACER Press, pp. 119-155.
- Rodriguez, K. J., Delogu, F., Versley, Y., Stemle, E. and M. Poesio. (2010) Anaphoric Annotation of Wikipedia and Blogs in the Live Memories Corpus. In *Proceedings of the Seventh International Conference on Language Resources and Evaluation (LREC)*, Valletta, Malta, May 2010.
- Smith, L.T. (1999). *Decolonizing methodologies: research and Indigenous peoples*. London. Zed Books.
- Stenhouse, L. (1978). Case study and case records: Towards a contemporary history of education. In *British Educational Research Journal* 4:2, pp.21–39. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0141192780040202>
- Verran, H., & Christie, M. (2007). Using/Designing digital technologies of representation in Aboriginal Australian knowledge practice. *Human Technology*. 3(2) May, pp. 214-227.
- Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind and society: The development of higher mental processes*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Wills, S. (2012). The simulation triad. In Nygaard, C., Leigh, E. & Courtney, N. (Eds.) *Transforming university teaching into learning via games, simulations and role-plays*. Oxfordshire: Libri Publishing.

**Author contact details:**

Cat Kutay [ckutay@cse.unsw.edu.au](mailto:ckutay@cse.unsw.edu.au)  
 Lynette Riley [lynette.riley@sydney.edu.au](mailto:lynette.riley@sydney.edu.au)  
 Deirdre Howard-Wagner [deirdre.howard-wagner@sydney.edu.au](mailto:deirdre.howard-wagner@sydney.edu.au)  
 Janet Mooney [janet.mooney@sydney.edu.au](mailto:janet.mooney@sydney.edu.au)

**Please cite as:** Kutay, C, Riley, L, Howard-Wagner, D. and Mooney J. (2012) Teaching Aboriginal Culture Online: sustaining traditions of knowledge sharing. In M. Brown, M. Hartnett & T. Stewart (Eds.), *Future challenges, sustainable futures*. Proceedings ascilite Wellington 2012. (pp.529-538).

<https://doi.org/10.14742/apubs.2012.1566>

Copyright © 2012 Kutay, Riley, Howard-Wagner and Mooney.

The author(s) assign to the ascilite and educational non-profit institutions, a non-exclusive licence to use this document for personal use and in courses of instruction, provided that the article is used in full and this copyright statement is reproduced. The author(s) also grant a non-exclusive licence to ascilite to publish this document on the ascilite website and in other formats for the Proceedings ascilite 2012. Any other use is prohibited without the express permission of the author(s).